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PAT AND THE SPIDER

Pat and the Spider

The Biter Bit

BY THE AUTHOR OF
'THE STORY OF LITTLE BLACK MINGO'

THE MUSSON BOOK COMPANY
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ONCE upon a time there was a little boy called Pat, who went for a walk in the jungle. And as he was going along a butterfly called out to him, "Oh, Pat, Pat, *please* help me out of this dreadful spider's web."

"Yes, I will, with pleasure," said Pat, and he tore the spider's web in pieces, and let the butterfly out.

Then the butterfly perched—

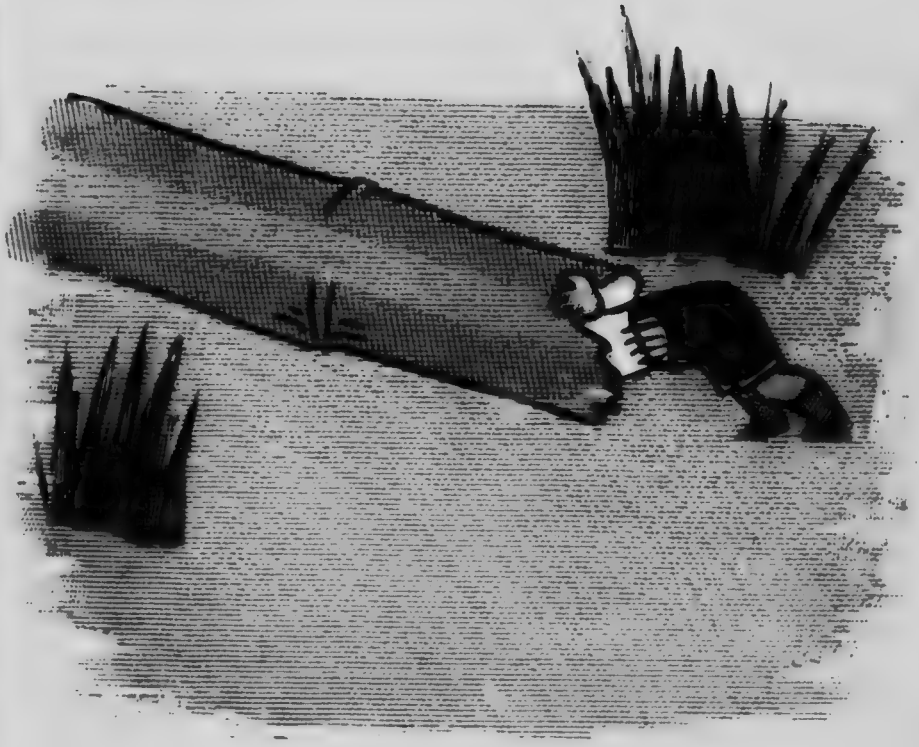
on Pat's finger and said, "Now what can I do for you?"

"Oh," said Pat, "I wish you would tell me how to grow as small as you."

"Do you see those bamboos up the road?" said the butterfly. Those are telescope bamboos; if you creep through one way they make you small, and if you creep through the other way they make you large."

Then the butterfly flew joyfully away, and Pat ran off to look for a bamboo. He found an old one, but he could hardly get into it; however by pushing his feet in first he just managed.

And coming out at the other end was not nearly so difficult as he expected.



Now he was about as big as a large doll, but he wanted to be much smaller, so he crept through again, and this time it was quite easy.

He crept through several times, and when he came out at last just the size of his own fore-finger, he *was* delighted.

He dressed himself up in all sorts of flowers, but though they looked very lovely, they were not at all strong, so—

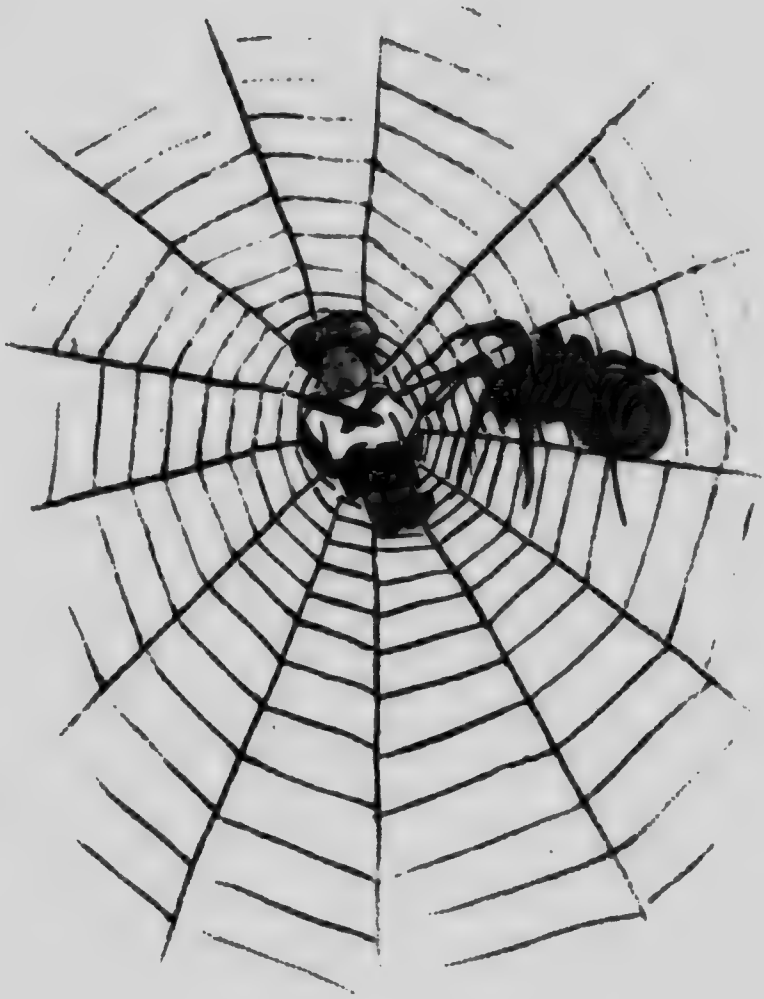
he soon threw them off again, and had a delightful ride upon a very springy blade of grass, and—

then he climbed up the stem of a great bramble bush. That was splendid; the thorns made it just like going up a ladder.

And at the top what delicious brambles he found! He sat on a leaf and was having a great feast off one single one, when—

suddenly a bird made a dab at him, and Pat was so frightened he tumbled heels over head off the leaf, and fell—

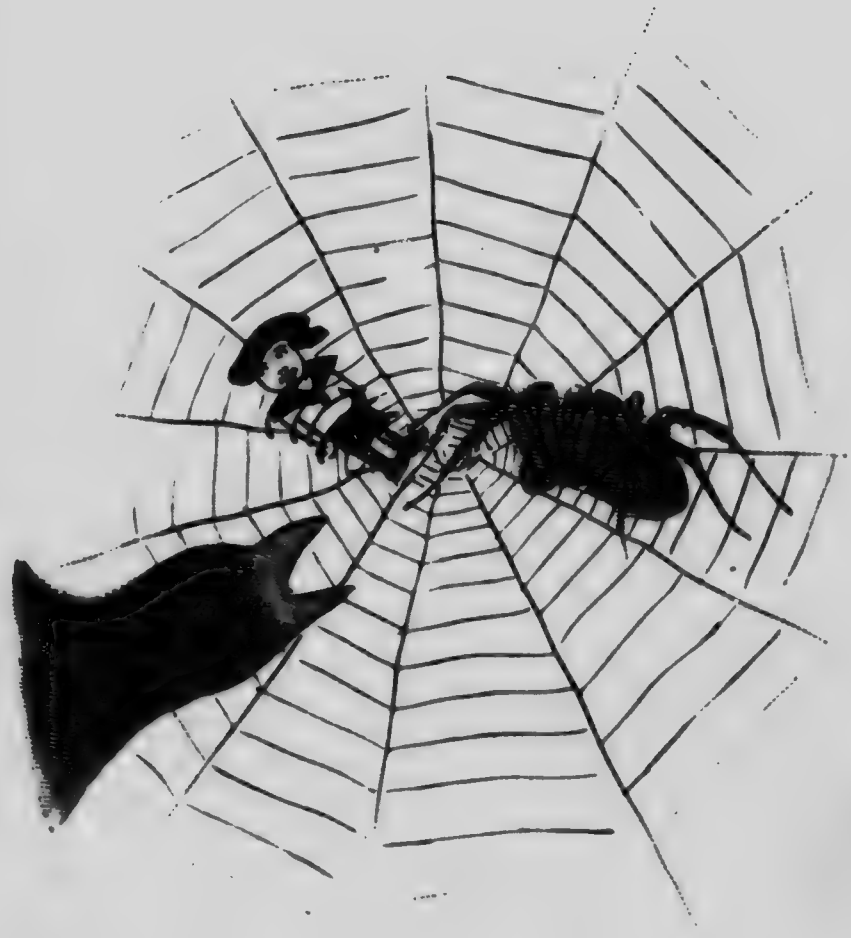
plump into the middle of a spider's web. The spider got such a start it dropped to the ground, but in another moment it came scrambling back up its thread.



"Ho, ho!" it said. "You are the little boy who broke my web this morning. I wish I could eat you at once, but I've just eaten two great blue-bottles; I'll have to keep you for a day or two."

And it began to cover Pat with thread, till he could not move a finger.

But just as the spider had almost finished, the bird who had frightened Pat made a dash at it.



And it dropped to the ground again in a great fright;

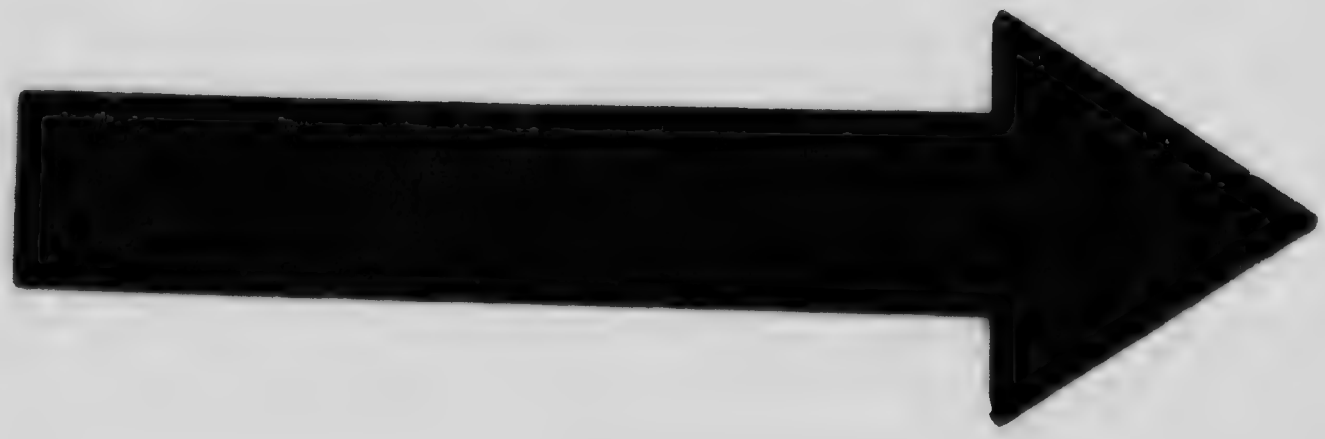
while the bird flew on, with Pat sticking to its head by the cobwebs. Pat was dreadfully afraid he would fall,

but by degrees he managed to wriggle back on to the bird's neck, and then he sat up, and began pulling off the bits of cobweb.

Before he could get them all off, the bird dashed under a branch, and Pat was left sticking in a fork, miles and miles above the ground it seemed to him.

Then he was glad he still had some of the spider's threads about him, for they made a splendid rope for sliding down.

And when he got safely to the ground he easily pulled off the last bits, and was running along joyfully, when—



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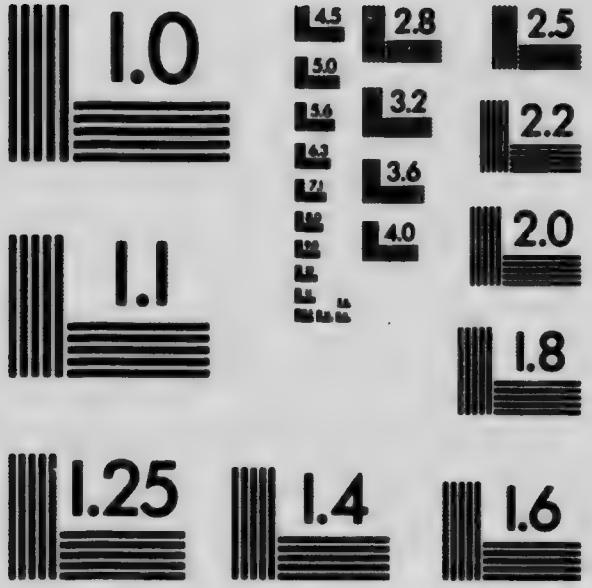

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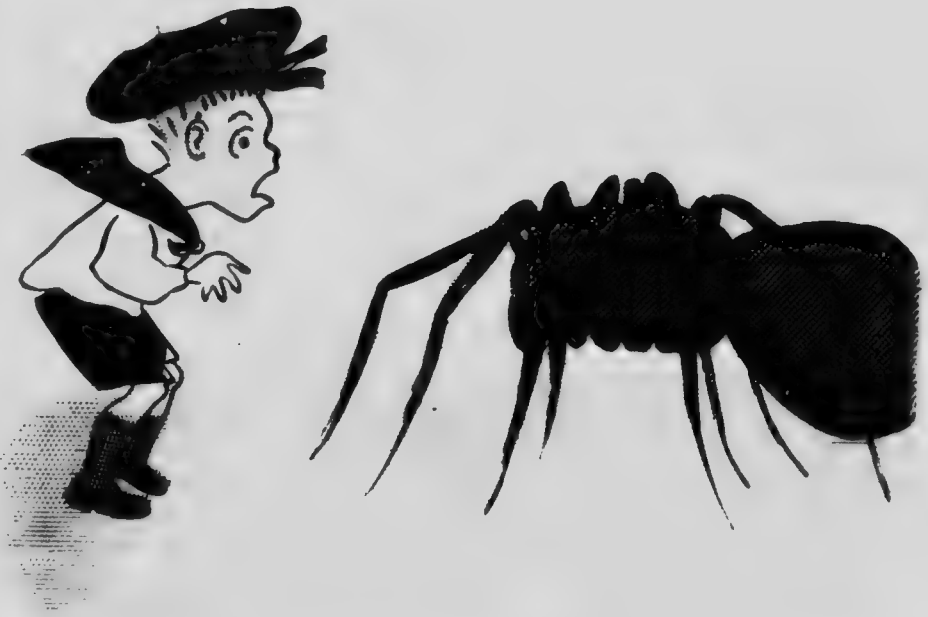


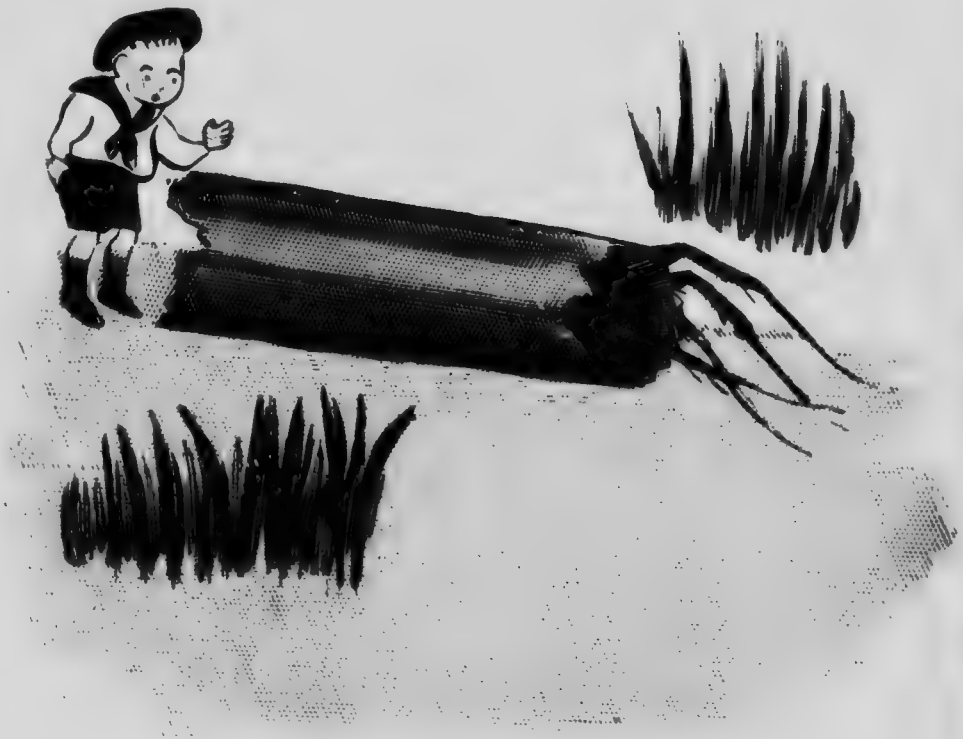
suddenly he met the spider again.

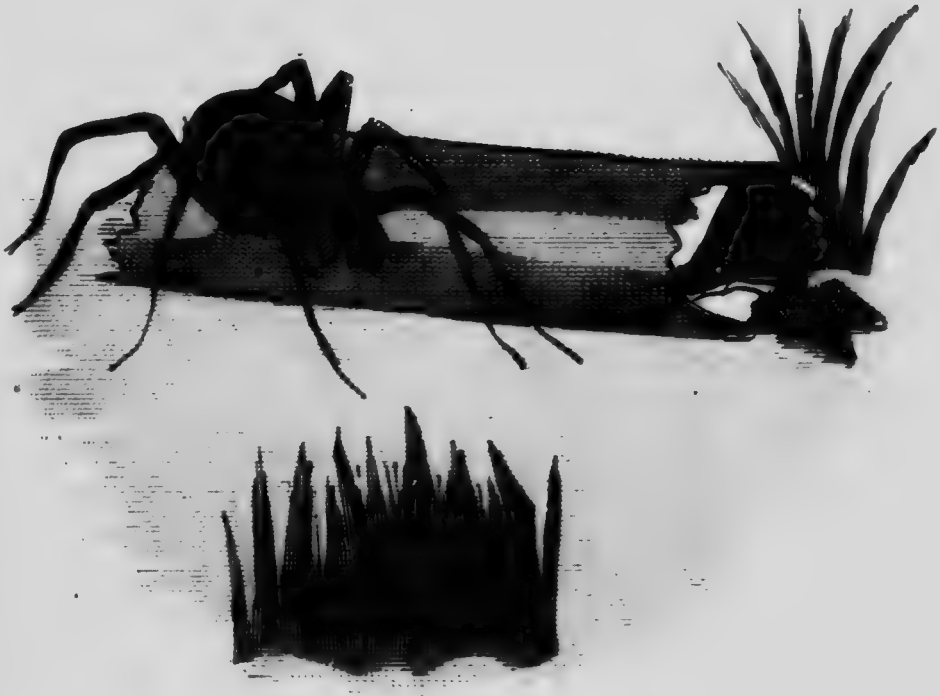
"What a joyful meeting!" said the spider, but—

Pat did not think so, and he turned and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him.

Fortunately he ran straight to the big bamboo, and just as the spider was going to catch his leg he dashed in.

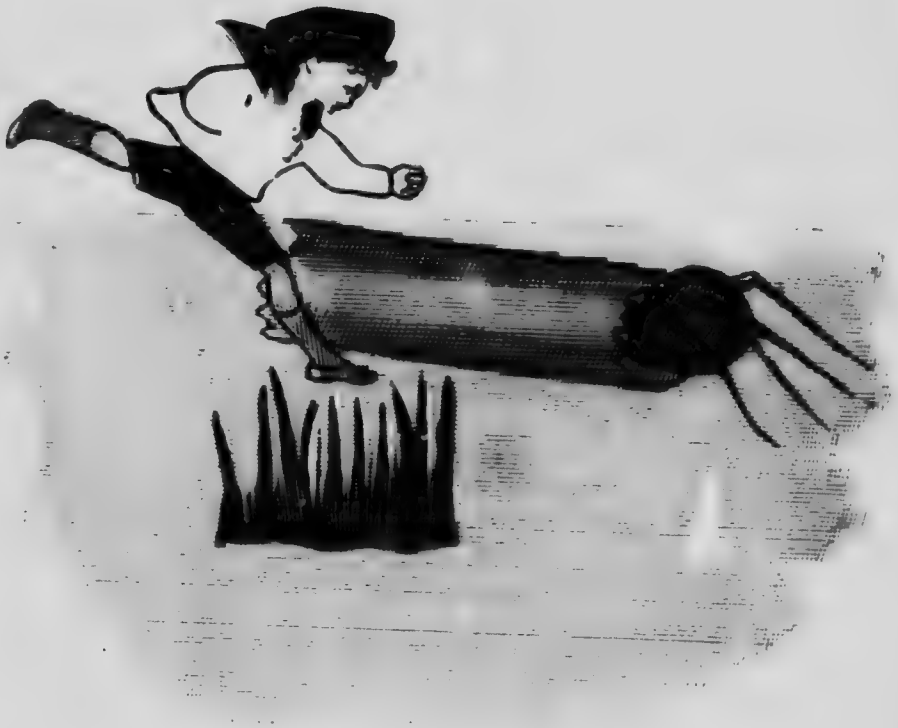
But the spider dashed in after him.





And oh! how *huge*
it was when it came out.
Pat scrambled in again
as fast as ever he could,

and ran to catch the spider before it could get in again.

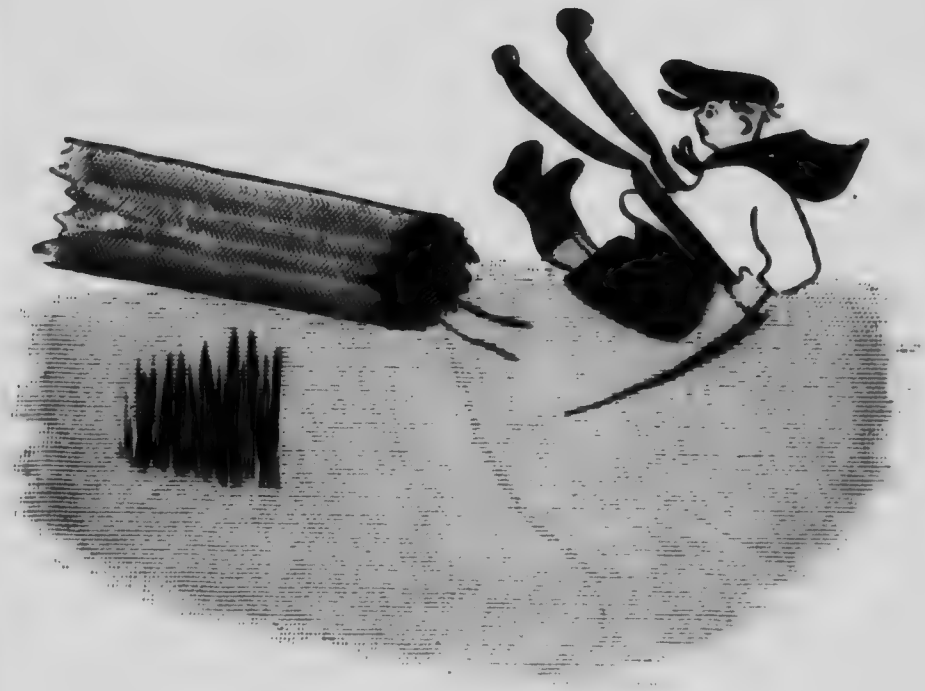


He was just in time to catch its two hind legs, which he seized, and hauled as hard as ever he could.

Suddenly the spider jerked off both legs, and Pat sat down with a bump, while it crawled quickly on.

Before Pat could follow it he heard a noise behind him, and when he looked round he saw a tiger coming softly up behind him.

In a minute he had crawled into the bamboo, behind the spider, and the tiger went along the bamboo sniffing and calling, "Pat, come out, I want you!"



But what a start he got, when a spider as large as a rocking-horse came out.

"Get out of my way," said the spider, "I want to catch Pat."

"*You* are Pat!" said the tiger, and without another word he ate it up.

But the spider was fearfully poisonous, and before the tiger could finish it he fell down dead.

And Pat ran gaily home to tea.